

Message Text

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45

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

OMB-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 EB-07 COME-00 SIL-01

LAB-04 TRSE-00 AF-06 EA-06 ARA-06 /105 W

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P R 021704Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2679

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO

SUBJ: MAY DAY ACTIVITIES PRECIPITATE SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST
CONFRONTATION

REF: LISBON 2471; LONDON FBIS 020400, 020238, AND 020612

SUMMARY: FESTIVE MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS IN LISBON MARKED BY
LARGE RALLIES. COMMUNISTS OUTMANEUVERED SOCIALISTS, FILLED
STADIUM, AND EXCLUDED SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES FROM
SPEAKERS STAND. SOCIALISTS REACTING. NEW LEGAL PROVISIONS
GIVE INTERSINDICAL LEGAL RECOGNITION, RAISE MINIMUM WAGE, CURB
DISMISSALS, AND FREEZE HIGH SALARIES. PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER'S
SPEECHES MODERATE. FOREIGN PARTICIPATION HAD HEAVY COMMUNIST
TILT. END SUMMARY.

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1. MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS THROUGHOUT PORTUGAL MARKED BY LARGE

NON-VIOLENT TURNOUTS REMINISCENT OF CROWDS WHICH SPONTANEOUSLY CELEBRATED FALL OF CAETANO REGIME ON MAY DAY 1974. IN CONTRAST TO NON-PARTISAN NATURE OF THAT POPULAR CELEBRATION, MAY DAY 1975 WAS NOTABLE FOR HIGH DEGREE OF PARTISAN FEELINGS.

2. ALL-DAY OBSERVANCES IN LISBON COMMENCED WITH INTERNATIONAL TRACK MEET AND SOCCER GAME BEFORE SOME 40,000 SPECTATORS. MASSIVE PARADE IN AFTERNOON CULMINATED IN RALLY AT FIRST OF MAY STADIUM WHERE CROWD ADDRESSED BY PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES AND PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES. ESTIMATED 60,000 JAMMED STADIUM, PERHAPS EQUAL NUMBER UNABLE TO ENTER DUE TO CROWDING. CROWD IN MORNING PREDOMINANTLY SOCIALIST, BUT AFTERNOON RALLY HAD HEAVY COMMUNIST PARTY MAJORITY AS PCP LED PARADE AND MOST OF SOCIALIST AND ALL OF PPD CONTINGENTS WERE UNABLE TO ENTER STADIUM.

3. THERE WAS ONE SIGNIFICANT CONFRONTATION. MARIO SOARES AND OTHER SOCIALIST LEADERS WERE DENIED ADMISSION TO SPEAKERS PODIUM AT STADIUM RALLY BY REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERSINDICAL. SOARES AND OTHERS, MARCHING WITH SOCIALIST CONTINGENT IN LATTER PART OF PARADE, ARRIVED AT STADIUM MID-WAY IN PRESIDENT'S SPEECH WHEN CEREMONIES NEARLY OVER. IN ORDER TO AVOID INCIDENT, SOCIALIST COMMUNIQUE STATES THEY DESISTED FROM ATTEMPTING TO FORCE ENTRY. COMMUNIQUE WARNS INTERSINDICAL THAT IF IT IDENTIFIES ITSELF WITH "UNITARIAN" PARTIES AND IGNORES THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LARGEST PARTY REPRESENTING PORTUGUESE WORKERS, IT PLACES ITSELF IN A POSITION WHERE IT CANNOT IMPOSE ITS WILL ON THE COUNTRY. PPD CONTINGENT OF APPROXIMATELY 1200 FOLLOWING SOCIALISTS IN PARADE WAS ALSO UNABLE TO ENTER STADIUM AND MARCHED IN SURROUNDING AREA.

4. PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES RECEIVED LUKEWARM RECEPTION TO SPEECH WHICH UNDERLINED IMPORTANCE OF ALLIANCE OF "PEOPLE" WITH THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT, BUT ALSO WARNED THAT NATION IS FACING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND THERE IS NEED FOR RESTRAINT IN WORKERS' DEMANDS. PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES GREETED BY CHANT "SOCIALISM - YES; LIBERALISM - NO*" AND INTERRUPTED SEVERAL TIMES BY CHANTS UNRELATED TO HIS SPEECH. PRESIDENT'S SPEECH EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF RECENT CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, LIBERTY, AND REPEATED THE PRIME MINISTER'S WARNING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON NEED FOR PRODUCTIVITY, NONE OF WHICH EVOKED POPULAR RESPONSE.

5. INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF DAY WERE PLAYED DOWN BY PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER BUT GIVEN EMPHASIS BY MEDIA. ATHLETES FROM POLAND, BULGARIA, AND GDR PARTICIPATED IN TRACK MEET. LABOR DELEGATIONS WERE PRESENT FROM THE THREE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATIONS, ICFTU, WCL, AND WFTU, AND FROM ANGOLA (UNTA), YUGOSLAVIA, ITALY (CGIL, UIL, CISL), CHILE (CUT),

POLAND, CUBA, ROMANIA, SPAIN (CCOO, UGT), GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, FRANCE (CGT, CFDT), SOVIET UNION, GUINEA (UNTG), VIETNAM (NFL), AND HUNGARY. UNITED STATES LARGELY IGNORED EXCEPT FOR OCCASIONAL CHANT AT RALLY AND MINISCULE DEMONSTRATION AT EMBASSY, BOTH CALLING "OUT WITH CIA."

6. NEW LEGAL MEASURES - REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL APPROVED DECREE-LAW APRIL 30 GRANTING LEGAL PERSONALITY TO INTERSINDICAL, THUS INSTITUTIONALIZING PRESENT DE FACTO SITUATION. REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ALSO APPROVED UNITARY LABOR LAW AND RELATED LAW REGULATING MANAGERIAL ASSOCIATIONS. FINAL TEXTS THESE LAWS STILL AWAITING PROMULGATIONS.

7. MINISTER OF LABOR COSTA MARTINS, PRESIDING OVER MAJOR MAY DAY MANIFESTATION IN OPORTO, ANNOUNCED FORTHCOMING DECREE RAISING MINIMUM WAGE TO 4,000 ESCUDOS MONTHLY (U.S. \$160), THE FREEZING OF WAGES ABOVE \$480 MONTHLY, A NATIONAL MINIMUM OF 15 DAYS VACATION WITH 100 PERCENT BONUS, AND AN INDEFINITE SUSPENSION OF DISMISSALS WITHOUT CAUSE. DEMONSTRATION REPORTEDLY LARGEST IN CITY'S HISTORY, WITH LARGE PREPONDERANCE OF SOCIALISTS.

8. FOUR OTHER RALLIES IN LISBON WERE SPONSORED BY VARIOUS EXTREME LEFTIST FRINGE GROUPS -- THE UDP, THE MRPP, THE PRP-BR, AND A CONGLOMERATION OF INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS. NONE ATTRACTED MORE THAN SEVERAL HUNDRED SUPPORTERS.

9. NUMEROUS RALLIES IN CITIES OTHER THAN LISBON AND OPORTO WERE NOTABLE FOR IMPORTANCE OF OFFICIALS DELEGATED TO PRESIDE, E.G., ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE TO BEJA.

10. COMMENT: SOCIALISTS ARE FUMING AT ONCE AGAIN HAVING BEEN OUT-MANEUVERED AND OUT-ORGANIZED BY THE PCP. ENBOLDENED BY THEIR OWN UNEXPECTED STRENGTH AT THE POLLS, THEY NOW ARE IN A SITUATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHERE THEY FEEL THEY MUST REACT OR LOSE THE FRUITS OF THEIR VICTORY. SOCIALIST, POSSIBLY WITH PPD SUPPORT, ARE PLANNING TO HOLD A PROTEST RALLY IN CENTRAL LISBON THIS EVENING (MAY 2) BUT ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY GETTING RADIO TO CARRY ANNOUNCEMENT. OUTLOOK IS FOR INCREASINGLY OPEN CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS.
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